



Online Learning Begins August 17.

August 4, 2020

Dear Kyrene Families,

The 2020-21 school year is set to begin for all Kyrene families in less than two weeks, and I, like all of you, am anxious for the State of Arizona to release the criteria schools must meet in order to offer in-person instruction.

Governor Doug Ducey has directed schools to begin providing online instruction by August 17, if Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) benchmarks do not allow for teacher-led, in-person instruction. While we are still awaiting those benchmarks, State Superintendent Kathy Hoffman announced yesterday that Arizona schools will not meet criteria to open for in-person learning by August 17.

Online Instruction Begins August 17

The Kyrene Governing Board, last night, voted to approve a resolution that allows the District to take necessary actions in order to meet the terms of Arizona Executive Orders [2020-51](#), [2020-44](#) and [2020-41](#). Specifically, the Resolution establishes that teacher-led, in-person instruction will not begin until the District determines it has met the (as yet undisclosed) ADHS guidelines.

Today, I am announcing the difficult decision to begin the school year on August 17 with all Kyrene students learning online.

This decision is consistent with current State and County data, in anticipation of the ADHS benchmarks to come, and is aligned with all the above-listed executive orders.

COVID-19 tracking data from Johns Hopkins University & Medicine shows Arizona's daily positivity rate as high as 30% in the past two weeks, and our positivity rate continues to be among the highest in the nation. In Maricopa County alone, daily infection rates are at their highest levels since the pandemic began. With that data in

hand, we can predict that Arizona schools are unlikely to meet any benchmarks established by the State.

Once the ADHS criteria for reopening are available, my team and I will constantly evaluate the status of our schools against those criteria, to determine when in-person instruction can resume.

Impact on Learning Options

KDA: No impact. School is already in session and will continue uninterrupted.

Flex Distance Learning: No impact at this time. When it is safe to resume in-person instruction, Flex families will be notified to confirm their selection in the Flex model.

In-Person Learning: Students enrolled in In-Person Learning will instead receive live, online instruction until further notice. As soon as schools meet the ADHS reopening benchmarks, Kyrene will communicate a plan for transitioning your students to in-person instruction. In the meantime, here are some key pieces of information for In-Person families:

- Your students' live, online instruction will be provided by their assigned classroom teachers.
- The online school day will be structured the same as the Flex Distance Learning day. Here is a [sample schedule](#).
- Each Kyrene student will need an individual computer or Chromebook in order to attend online classes, and the District is prepared to support all students without a suitable device at home. A separate communication is coming shortly with further information about next week's technology and curriculum distribution. There is no request form to fill out, and you do not need to take any action.
- Community Education programming will be available, including preschool and before and after school programming.

On-site Support Services Available

Limited on-site services will be available for students with exceptional circumstances. Executive Order 2020-51 requires every district to offer free, targeted on-site services during school hours for qualified students, including students with disabilities, children who qualify for free and reduced lunch, English language learners, children in foster care and children experiencing homelessness.

Kyrene School District is committed to providing the following free services and supports to qualifying students:

- Meal service (breakfast and lunch)
- Health services
- Targeted Special Education and related services
- Integrated Preschool, for children with disabilities. (Typically developing children are still welcome in Integrated Preschool, but normal fees will apply.)

Opportunities for qualified students to access their online instruction under adult supervision

- Transportation to and from schools, for eligible students

Schools will notify qualifying families about the availability of on-site services, beginning this week.

Respectfully, I ask that you do not contact schools or the District to ask if your child is eligible for services, as our front offices may not be able to answer that question, and a deluge of calls and emails will only slow down the notification process. Thank you in advance for your patience as schools identify students and reach out to families directly.

If you do not receive a notification by Tuesday, August 11, and you believe your child qualifies for in-person support, there will be a system for requesting on-site services.

Kyrene schools will observe social distancing and all other [safety measures](#) as outlined by the CDC for on-site services, based on available personnel capacity and physical space. Capacity is extremely limited due to these variables. Should there be additional capacity, space will be made available for the children of essential workers and other working families.

Further detail about on-site services will be shared with the Governing Board and the public next week and will be posted online at that time.

Further Information

Kyrene School District continues to update and expand our online clearinghouse of information at www.kyrene.org/safestrong. I encourage all families to bookmark that page and to also follow the District and your school on social media. This year, more than ever, it will be critical for our community to stay connected.

This has been an agonizing deliberative process, led by scientific data, and taking into account the unique circumstances of each of our Kyrene families, teachers and staff. Please know that we will continue to give 100% to ensure that all students receive the instructional and social/emotional supports needed while learning remotely.

We have prepared for this, and Kyrene teachers are ready to deliver an outstanding online education for your children. Together, we are Kyrene Strong.

Sincerely,

Jan Vesely, Ed.D.
Superintendent



Our Vision: All students achieve at their maximum potential to become problem-solvers, creators, and visionaries of tomorrow.

Our Mission: Kyrene School District will commit to student success for all, by providing engaging, challenging educational environments which promote and inspire passion for learning, leading, and achieving transformative life outcomes.

LEARNING. LEADING. ACHIEVING.

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